

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

June 6, 1996

Today's announcement by the British and Irish Governments on the arrangements for the June 10 negotiations on Northern Ireland marks another historic step toward a brighter future for the people. I welcome this agreement, which will enable the negotiation of a comprehensive and lasting settlement to the conflict that has plagued generations.

I commend Prime Ministers Major and Bruton for the perseverance and determination that they have shown in the cause of peace. I have just spoken with them both, and once again I am impressed by their commitment to the peace process. From the Downing Street Declaration of December 1993 to the Joint Framework Documents of February 1995 and the joint communique of February 28 of this year, the two governments have worked tirelessly to establish the foundation for successful talks. I am pleased that Senator George Mitchell has agreed to chair the plenary session of the

talks. I know that he and his colleagues, General John de Chastelain and Mr. Harri Holkeri, will again make a major contribution to the peace process.

With the start of the talks on June 10, the parties have a real chance to set aside the past and negotiate a future of hope and promise, justice and peace. This is something only they can do. But I want them to know that the United States will continue to stand with them as they work to make that dream a reality. I call once again for a restoration of the IRA cease-fire which will enable the talks to be fully inclusive.

The success of these talks will depend on the vision and generosity of spirit of the elected representatives of the people. My hopes and prayers are with them as they begin to forge a bright and prosperous future for the children of both of Ireland's vibrant traditions.

Remarks on the National Economy and an Exchange With Reporters

June 7, 1996

The President. Good morning. Today we have been given fresh evidence that the American economy is growing steady and strong. What the job report today shows is that when we make tough choices, there is absolutely no limit to what the American people can do to create jobs and opportunity. This report says that in the past 2 months the American economy has created half a million jobs and that for 21 months in a row now, the unemployment rate has been under 6 percent, that real wages for hard-working Americans are finally on the rise because of their growing productivity.

When I took office our Nation faced a very different economic picture. Four years ago unemployment was 7.6 percent and rising, the deficit was skyrocketing, job growth was very, very slow. We put into place a comprehensive and tough economic package to create growth and to generate jobs. We cut the deficit in half, expanded trade to record levels, and invested

in our people and their future. The result has been sustained economic growth, based on sound principles. Inflation is low; investment is up; a higher percentage of new jobs are private sector jobs than at any time since the 1920's.

When we put this strategy into place it was bitterly opposed by many people. They warned it would hurt the economy. They did everything they could to derail it, and it survived by the barest of margins in the Congress. Well, 3½ years later, it is now clear that the tough choices produced good results for the American people.

I said we would cut the deficit in half; the deficit will be cut by more than half in 4 years. I said this plan would create 8 million jobs; the latest job figures, including the annual revision of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, indicate that the economy in 3½ years has produced 9.7 million new jobs for the American people. That is growth, and growth without inflation.